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THE ODES OF CONFUCIUS

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THE WISDOM OF THE EAST

THE ODES OF CONFUCIUS

RENDERED BY

L. CRANMER-BYNG

Author of "THE NEVER-ENDING WRONG," and other Renderings from the Chinese

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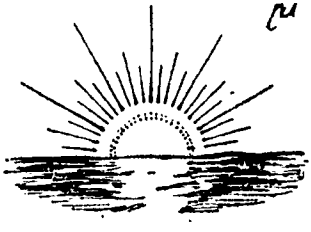

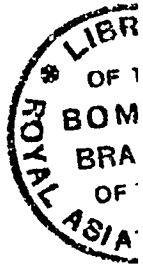

LONDON
THE ORIENT PRESS
Editorial Department: 168 FLEET STREET, E.C.
Trade Department: 26 PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.
1904

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INTRODUCTION

"WHILE reading the works of Confucius, I have always fancied I could see the man as he was in life, and, when I went to Shantung, I actually beheld his carriage, his robes, and the material parts of his ceremonial usages. There were his descendants practising the old rites in their ancestral home; and I lingered on, unable to tear myself away. Many are the princes and prophets that the world has seen in its time; glorious in life, forgotten in death. But Confucius, though only a humble member of the cotton-clothed masses, remains among us after many generations. He is the model for such as would be wise. By all, from the Son of Heaven down to the meanest student, the supremacy of his principles is fully and freely admitted. He may, indeed, be pronounced the divinest of men." *

This is the tribute of Ssŭ-Ma Ch'ien, the author of the first great History of China, who lived in the first century before Christ. Many centuries have gone since the old historian, out of the fulness of his heart, sang the praises of the Master and the supremacy of his principles. To-day, as a thousand years ago, the school children take their first serious instruction from the five books, or *King* as they are called in Chinese :—

* "Gems of Chinese Literature," by Herbert Giles (Quaritch).

The Shu King, or Book of History; The I King, or Book of Changes; The Shi King, or Book of Poetry; The Li Chi, or Book of Rites; The Ch'un Ch'in, or Annals of Spring and Autumn.

The Shi King, or Book of Poetry, from which these poems are rendered through the prose translations of Professor Legge in his great series of Chinese classics, was compiled by Confucius about 500 B.C. from earlier collections which had been long existent, two of which, we know from an ode written about 780 B.C., were called *Ya* and *Nan* respectively. The oldest of these odes belong to the Shang dynasty, 1765–1122 B.C.; the latest to the time of King Ting, 605–585 B.C. The odes may be roughly divided into two classes:—(1) The Songs of the People; (2) The Official Odes. Professor Giles, in his "History of Chinese Literature" (Heinemann), divides the latter into three classes:—(*a*) Odes sung at ordinary entertainments given by the suzerain; (*b*) Odes sung on grand occasions when the feudal nobles were gathered together; (*c*) Panegyrics and sacrificial odes.

The great importance that Confucius placed upon the Book of Poetry may be gathered from the following anecdote:—One day his son Le was passing hurriedly through the Court, when he met his father standing alone lost in thought. Confucius, on seeing his son, addressed him thus—

"Have you read the Odes?"

He replied, "Not yet."

"Then," said Confucius, "if you do not learn the Odes, you will not be fit to converse with."

To understand this, we must know something of the character and teachings of Confucius. William Morris was to some extent the Confucius of his age. Both men dreamt of a golden past—a past brilliant with heroic deeds, mellowed with peace, and serene beneath the first clear dawn of ancient wisdom. Both drew inspiration from the unstained springs of poetry. Morris went back to the sagas of the North and the tales and tragedies of the early Greeks; Confucius to the odes and ballads of his own country. For Morris, "the idle singer of an empty day," the world had grown old and careworn and unheroic. Confucius, too, was born out of his due time. The world—his world of petty princelings and court intriguers and oppression—was not ripe for the great gospel of humanity he had come to preach. Each failed lamentably in politics, and succeeded elsewhere: Confucius as the transmitter of the wisdom of the ages, the revealer of human goodness through conduct and knowledge; William Morris as the inspired prophet of beauty, the teacher of good taste to the hideous Victorian age in which he was born. When the dogmas and economics of his socialism are forgotten, this influence will remain.

Lastly, and perhaps greatest parallel of all, both passionately loved the people. Confucius, when asked how the superior man attained his position, said: "He cultivates himself so as to bring rest unto the people." Again he said: "To govern a country of a thousand chariots, there must be reverent attention to business, and faithfulness,

economy in expenditure, and *love for the people.*" Both recognised, as all great men must, that there is more to be learnt from the natural man, the man who lives next to nature, and through his toil knows something of her ways and moods, than the artificial mime of ancient court or modern drawing-room. It was through the Odes that Confucius taught his own generation to understand the manners and customs and the simple feelings of the men of old. Here are no great poems written by highly cultivated men, but songs that came naturally from the hearts of all, concerning their little troubles, their hopes and fears, the business in which they were engaged. The farmer sings of his husbandry.

He gives us this picture of the workers over the land coming to clear the virgin soil of the grass and brushwood that cover it. "There they go in thousands, two and two, side by side, tearing the roots out of the soil; some to the marshlands, some where the dry paths wind through the meadows, and some by the river banks. There is the master inspecting all, with his sons ready at hand, followed by their households; there also are the neighbours who have come to help; there the hired servants. Now the feast has begun, sounds of revelry are heard; the husbands' hearts are full of love as they sit with their wives by their side. Now they begin again patiently to prepare the southern lands, breaking the soil with the ploughshare. Many kinds of grain they sow; soon strange life will arise from every ear, when the young blades raise their heads from the ground. See the young blades arise in long

unbroken lines that day by day grow and spear before us. Fertile is the swelling seed, and through it go the labourers who weed it over and over again. A little while and the reapers have come ; the golden grain is stacked high, the straw innumerable is multiplied. There is sufficient to make the spirits glad, to offer to the shades of our fathers, and yield whatever the rites require ; sufficiency for the kings and nobles to give mighty banquets, when at the fragrant feast both host and guest sit down together ; there is enough when the feast is over to satisfy the aged poor and cheer them with a never-ending abundance. Not now alone, but from all time and in all lands, the earth repays a thousand-fold to those who toil."

Such is the song of husbandry three thousand years ago. What joyousness is here! What scenes of peace and simple festival of family love and delight in the land!

Again some officer in the days of good King Wăn, galloping along a clear road on the king's service, hammers out the splendid galloping song, called "King's Messenger," in the present book, to the beat of his galloping horses' hoofs. No such poem was elaborated in garden or grove where the poets clustered, and drank, and sang. It comes straight from the heart of this nameless envoy of old, fiercely exulting in his own untiring energy and in the mettle of his splendid steeds. How many of these poems declare the joys of work bravely attempted—bravely done! These little sagas of blood and brain can teach us more of life than all the threadbare

moralities which serve as poetry in the modern day. How modern they are! Yes, indeed! as long as colour is colour, and life is life. As long as youth with its sublime folly will wait all night for the tryst that is never kept, these poems, the earliest collection of secular songs we know, will remain fresh and charm us to the end. These old writers, viewing nature at first hand and not through the medium of any books, wrote faithfully of what they felt and saw.

"With what delight does the eye wander over the surrounding landscape! Very gently the river glides along through the plain, which it makes beautiful with the long canal formed by its waters. To the south rise great mountains in the shape of an amphitheatre, while, on the further bank, reeds and pines, covered with a never-fading verdure, invite the fresh breath of the cooling winds. Happy places! those who dwell in you live like brothers. Never is the voice of discord heard among you. What glory shall be yours! The prince, whose heritage you are, hath chosen you for his abode. Already is the plan of his palace formed; proud walls arise, and grand terraces are building on the east and west. Haste to come, great prince! O haste to come; sports and pleasure wait upon thy coming. The solid foundations, which are now being laid with redoubled strokes of the hammer, display thy wisdom. Neither rains nor storms shall ever prevail against them. Never shall the insect which creeps or walks penetrate thy habitation. The guard who watches is sometimes surprised, the

swiftest dart may err, the frightened pigeon forgets the use of its wings, and the pheasant with difficulty flies before the eagle; but before thee every obstacle vanishes. With what majesty do these colonnades rear their fronts! How immense are those halls! Lofty columns support the ceiling, the brightness of the day illuminates them and penetrates them on all sides. It is here that my prince reposes; it is here that he sleeps, upon long mats woven with great art."

Often the song is one that only a woman could have sung. Some lady of the harem of King Wăn praises the queen, who is never jealous of the inferior wives, but cherishes them as some great tree cherishes the creepers that gather round it. Again, "the ripe plums are falling from the bough; only seven-tenths of them remain! If any desire to marry me, now has the fortunate time arrived!" In the second verse only three-tenths are left; in the third she had gathered them all into her basket: the lover has only to speak the word, and she will be his. Many of these odes are undoubtedly the work of women. The European idea that Chinese women are, and always have been, the closely prisoned slaves of their husbands, idle and soulless and ignorant, has been dispelled by Professor Giles in his interesting "Chinese Sketches" published by Kegan, Paul & Co. "In novels, for instance," he writes, "the heroine is always highly educated—*composes finished verses*, and quotes from Confucius; and it is only fair to suppose that such characters are not purely and wholly ideal. Besides, most

young Chinese girls whose parents are well off are taught to read. . . ." According to Legge, there was more freedom of movement allowed to women in the days when the odes were written and collected, before the custom of cramping the feet was introduced; consequently their minds were more able to expand from contact with the outer world, and better fitted for literary tasks. The names of the ladies Pan-Chieh-Yu and Fang Wei-I are well known to every student of Chinese literature.

Perhaps the great importance of the odes, first grasped by Confucius, and afterwards by the whole of China, lies in the fact that they are no mere abstract creations of an imaginative brain. Each one of these nameless poets writes about himself or herself; their sorrows, their aspirations, their outlook on their own times, contented or gloomy, are all chronicled herein. In the official odes we see the feudal princes coming to town to greet their sovereign lord. The state-carriages with their four-horse teams have gone to greet them. What gifts has the king to bestow on those he delights to honour? Bring forth the dark-coloured robes embroidered with the dragon, and the silken skirts with the hatchet design upon them. See, they are coming, you may tell by the dragon flags that wave before them—coming, by the *hwuy-hwuy* sound of the bells that reaches us. By the bright red buskins that cover the knees we know them. These are the princes!

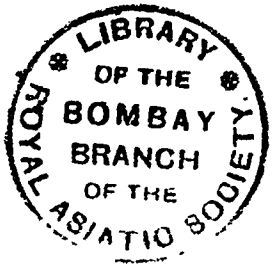
No great poetry to be sure! no monolith of inspired travail by a giant race that may stand alone

in the time-deserted regions of sand and silence! These are just the natural songs that float upward from the happy valleys and down the sedge-strewn banks of the wandering K'e. Above all, they are naive and bright as on their birthday, with that most precious quality of truth and unconscious art which never lets them tarnish or fade. The king is very wicked! The poor groom of the Chamber to His Majesty gives vent to his sorrow in song. He lets you know all about it. The royal naughtiness stands clearly revealed, not by any calico-tearing epithets such as a modern poet affrights the ears of a Sultan with, but just a gentle bland admonishment, a little dirge of political desolation and the knell of a falling dynasty.

I have put, or tried to put, these poems back into poetry. Four of these pieces have been exquisitely rendered by my friend Mr Allen Upward, and speak for themselves.* As regards my own reasons for rendering Chinese poetry into English verse, I am content to shelter myself behind the great authority and judgment of Sir John Davis, who, in his "Poetry of the Chinese," contends that "verse must be the shape into which Chinese, as well as other poetry, must be converted, in order to do it mere justice." I will, however, take the opportunity of saying, in conclusion, that the great literatures of the world have been too long in the hands of mere scholars, to whom the letter has been all-important and the spirit

* Namely:—"The Prayer of Ching," p. 25; "Through Eastern Gates," p. 30; "The Pear-Tree," p. 34; "Blue Collar," p. 39.

nothing. The time has come when the literary man should stand forth and claim his share in the revelation of truth and beauty from other lands and peoples whom our invincible European ignorance has taught us to despise.



THE DESERTED WIFE

YOU came—a simple lad
In dark blue cotton clad,
To barter serge for silken wear;
But not for silk you dallied there.
Ah! was it not for me
Who led you through the K'e,
Who guided you
To far Tun-K'ew?
"It is not I who would put off the day;
But you have none your cause to plead,"
I said,—"O love, take heed,
When the leaves fall do with me what you may.'

I saw the red leaves fall,
And climbed the ruined wall,
Towards the city of Fuh-kwan
I did the dim horizon scan.
"He cometh not," I said,
And burning tears were shed:
You came—I smiled,
Love—reconciled,
You said, "By taper reed and tortoise-shell,
I have divined, and all, O love, is well."

"Then haste the car," I cried,
"Gather my goods and take me to thy side."

Before the mulberry tree
With leaves hath strewn the lea,
How glossy-green are they! how rare!
Ah! thou young thoughtless dove beware!
Avoid the dark fruit rife
With sorrow to thy life.
And thou, whose fence
Is innocence,
Seek no sweet pleasuring with any youth!
For when a man hath sinned, but little shame
Is fastened to his name,
Yet erring woman wears the garb of ruth.

When the lone mulberry tree
With leaves bestrews the lea,
They yellow slowly, slowly down
From green to gold, from gold to brown.
Three sombre years ago
I fled with you, and lo,
The floods of K'e
Now silently
Creep to the curtains of my little car.
Through cloud and gloom I was your constant star;
Now you have gone from sight,
And love's white star roams aimless through the night.

For three long years your wife,
Toil was my part in life,
Early from sleep I rose and went
About my labour, calm, content;
Nor any morn serene
Lightened the dull routine.
Early and late,
I was your mate,
Bearing the burdens that were yours to share.
Fain of the little love that was my lot,
Ah, kinsmen scorn me not!
How should ye know when silence chills despair?

Old we should grow in accord,
Old—and grief is my lord.
Between her banks the K'e doth steer,
And pine-woods ring the lonely mere.
In pleasant times I bound
My dark hair to the sound
Of whispered vows
'Neath lilac boughs,
And little recked o'er broken faith to weep.
Now the grey shadows o'er the marshland creep:
The willows stir and fret:
Low in the west the dull dun sun hath set.

KING'S MESSENGER

GALLOPING, galloping, gallant steed;
Six reins slackened and dull with sweat,
Galloping, galloping still we speed,
Seeking, counselling, onward set.

Galloping, galloping, piebald steed;
Six reins, silken reins, start and strain,
Galloping, galloping, still we speed,
News—what news—from the King's domain.

Galloping, galloping, white and black;
Six reins glossy and flaked with foam,
Galloping, galloping, look not back!
On for the King—for the King we roam.

Galloping, galloping, dappled grey;
Six reins true to the hand alone,
Galloping, galloping, night and day,
Seeking, questioning, galloping, gone!

FLIGHT

COLD and keen the north wind blows,
Silent falls the shroud of snows.
You who gave me your heart
Let us join hands and depart!
Is this a time for delay?
Now, while we may,
Let us away.

Wailingly the north wind goes,
Wailing through a whirl of snows.
You who gave me your heart
Let us join hands and depart!
Is this a time for delay?
Now, while we may,
Let us away.

Only the lonely fox is red,
Black but the crow-flight overhead.
You who gave me your heart,
The chariot creaks to depart,
Is this a time for delay?
Now, while we may,
Let us away.

THE TOWER OF WĂN

WĂN drew a tower of bold ascent,
A tower of lofty size.
In crowds the zealous builders went,
The walls began to rise.
" Haste not," said he, when first the work began ;
But all the people were as sons of Wăn.

The King was in the wondrous park,
The does so sleek and brown
Lay couched in fern ; from dawn to dark
White birds came glistening down ;
The King was by the pond whose waters hold
A thousand carp with ruddy scales of gold.

Upon his posts the fretted board
Is hung with drums and bells ;
What music chimes from their accord,
What sound of laughter swells
From the pavilion of the circling pool
Where joy and Wăn, the brother monarchs, rule.

What harmony of bells and drums !
What call of drums and bells !
Beyond the flaming water comes
What sound of happy spells.
The blind musicians blind us with delight ;
While the deep lizard drums roll on till night.

DRIFTING

TWO youths into their boats descend,
Whose shadows on the waters sway ;
Ah ! light hearts bravely sped away,
My heavy heart forbodes the end.

Two youths into their boats descend,
Two lives go drifting far from me ;
Between the willow glooms I see
Death lurking at the river's bend.

THE SLANDERERS

THE blue flies buzz upon the wing,
From fence to fence they wander;
O happy King! O courteous King!
Give heed to no man's slander.

The noisy blue flies rumble round,
Upon the gum-trees lighting;
A tongue of evil hath no bound,
And sets the realm a-fighting.

The clumsy blue flies buzzing round
Upon the hazels blunder;
O cursèd tongue that knows no bound,
And sets us two asunder.

LOVE AND THE MAGISTRATE

WHEN the great carriage rumbles by,
I see him in his robes of state,
Calm, pitiless, sedate,
Man of the cold far-piercing eye,
O but I long for you,
Right for you, wrong for you,
Naught could keep us apart,
But the cold eye reading my heart.

When the great carriage rumbles on,
In robes of state carnation red
I see the man of dread,
Bright gleaming robes and glance of stone,
O then I long for you,
Right for you, wrong for you,
Naught could keep us apart
But the cold eye reading my heart.

Together we may never bide,
Nor you and me one roof contain,
But death shall not divide;
The same close grave shall wed the twain.
Say! am I cold to you?
Nay! I will hold to you,
By the bright sun I swear,
O my life, my love, my despair.

CITY OF CHOW

COLD from the spring the waters pass
Over the waving pampas grass.
All night long in dream I lie,
Ah me! ah me! to awake and sigh—
Sigh for the City of Chow.

Cold from the spring the rising flood
Covers the tangled southernwood.
All night long in dream I lie,
Ah me! ah me! to awake and sigh—
Sigh for the City of Chow.

Cold from its source the stream meanders,
Darkly down through the oleanders.
All night long in dream I lie,
Ah me! ah me! to awake and sigh—
Sigh for the City of Chow.

I

THE PRAYER OF THE EMPEROR CHING

LET me be reverent, be reverent,
Even as the way of Heaven is evident,
And its appointment easy is to mar.

Let me not say, "It is too high above,"
Above us and below us doth it move,
And daily watches wheresoe'er we are.

It is but as a little child I ask,
Without intelligence to do my task,
Yet learning, month by month, and day by day,

I will hold fast some gleams of knowledge bright.
Help me to bear my heavy burden right,
And show me how to walk in wisdom's way.

II

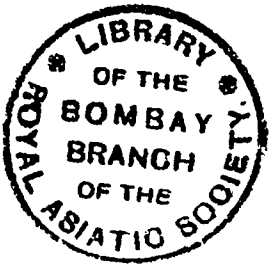
THE PRAYER OF THE EMPEROR CHING

EVEN as a little helpless child am I,
On whom hath fallen the perplexed affairs
Of this unsettled state. High loneliness
And sorrow are my portion. Thou great Father,
Thou kingly pattern of parental awe,
Whose mind for ever in the courts beheld,
Roaming, the royal image of thy sire,
Night long and day long, I—the little child—
Will so be reverent.

O ye great kings!
Your crowned successor crowns you in his heart.
Live unforgotten. Here, upon the verge
Of the momentous years, I pause and trace
The shining footsteps of my forefathers,
And the far-distant goal that drew them on—
Too distant for my range. Howe'er resolved
I may go forward, lo! a thousand tracks
Cause me to swerve aside. A little child—
Only a little child—I am too frail
To cope with the anxieties of state
And cares of king-craft. Yet I will ascend

Into my Father's room, and through the courts
Below, for ever seeking, I will pass,
To brush the skirts of inspiration
And touch the sleeves of memory.

O great
And gracious Father, hear and condescend
To guard, to cherish, to enlighten me.



MAYTIME

DEEP in the grass there lies a dead gazelle,
The tall white grass enwraps her where she fell.
With sweet thoughts natural to spring,
A pretty girl goes wandering
With lover that would lead astray.

The little dwarf oaks hide a leafy dell,
Far in the wilds there lies a dead gazelle;
The tall white grass enwraps her where she fell,
And beauty, like a gem, doth fling
Bright radiance through the blinds of spring.
"Ah, gently! do not disarray
My kerchief! gently, pray!
Nor make the watch-dog bark
Under my lattice dark."

LADY OF THE LAGOON

BY the shores of that lagoon,
Where the water-lily lies,
Where the tall valerians rise
Slender as the crescent moon,
Goes Hëa Nan . . . Ah, Hëa Nan,
Sleep brings me no relief:
My heart is full of grief.

By the shores of that lagoon,
Where the drowsy lotus lies,
Where the tall valerians rise
Brighter than the orbèd moon,
Shines Hëa Nan . . . Ah, Hëa Nan,
I turn and turn all night,
And dawn brings no respite.

THROUGH EASTERN GATES

THROUGH eastern gates I wandered far,
Where cloud-like beauties thronged the way;
Although like clouds their faces are,
My thoughts among them would not stay.
She in rough silk and kerchief blue
Gave me the only joy I knew.

I wandered by the curtain tower,
Like flowering rushes were the maids;
Although they match the rushes' flower,
Soon from my mind their beauty fades.
In humble silk and madder-dye,
She fills my heart with ecstasy.

THE STRAGGLER

THERE is that little oriole
At rest where the mound doth rise;
Oh, but the way is long,
Long that before me lies.
There is no rest for me,
None for my tired feet;
Give me to drink and eat,
Do what is best for me.
Order an ambulance car,
And carry me, carry me on.

There is that little oriole
At rest where the mound doth bend;
Oh, but I know no fear
Save if the march will end.
There is no rest for me,
None for my tired feet;
Give me to drink and eat,
Do what is best for me.
Order an ambulance car,
And carry me, carry me on.

There is that little oriole
At rest on the hillock grey;
Oh, but I know no fear
Save that I fall by the way.

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There is no rest for me,
None for my tired feet;
Give me to drink and eat,
Do what is best for me.
Order an ambulance car,
And carry me, carry me on.

THE HAPPY MAN

HE has perched in the valley with pines overgrown,
This fellow so stout and so merry and free;
He sleeps and he talks and he wanders alone,
And none are so true to their pleasures as he.

He has builded his hut in the bend of the mound,
This fellow so fine with his satisfied air;
He wakes and he sings with no neighbour around,
And whatever betide him his home will be there.

He dwells on a height amid cloudland and rain,
This fellow so grand whom the world blunders by;
He slumbers alone, wakes, and slumbers again,
And his secrets are safe in that valley of Wei.

THE PEAR-TREE

THIS shade-bestowing pear-tree, thou
Hurt not, nor lay its leafage low ;
Beneath it slept the Duke of Shaou.

This shade-bestowing pear-tree, thou
Hurt not, nor break one leafy bough ;
Beneath it stayed the Duke of Shaou.

This shade-bestowing pear-tree, thou
Hurt not, nor bend one leafy bough ;
Beneath it paused the Duke of Shaou.

PRINCELY VISITORS

WHITE birds went over the West—
Young egrets, over the marshlands flying,
My Lords came visiting, ermine-dressed,
With the birds in their elegant beauty vieing.

In their States they have high renown,
Of the city of Chow they are never tiring,
And the rivers of night wind darkly down
Past the towers of their fame still aspiring.

THE NIGHTLONG TRYST

DOWN by the eastern gate
The willow wood's astir ;
From dusk to dawn I wait
Through the soundless hours for her,
Till the morning star is shining.

Down by the eastern gate
The willow-thicket pales ;
From dusk to dawn I wait,
Till the last red lantern fails,
And the morning star is shining.

A WIFE'S MEMORIES

WITH taper rod of tall bamboo
You angle in the K'e,
Do I not go by dream to you
Who cannot come to me?

To left the Ts'euen waters roam,
The K'e flows on to right,
Ah! never gleams the newer home
Like that lost home to sight.

Leftward the Ts'euen stream beguiles,
And rightward calls the K'e,
Return, O light of happy smiles
And girdle-gems, to me!

The oars of cedar rise and fall
From boats of yellow pine,
Would I might roam the banks where all
The ghosts of girlhood shine!

THE PRINCES

THEY gather the beans, gather the beans,
In their baskets square and round:
The princes all are coming to court,
And where shall their gifts be found?
The coaches of state and their teams go by,
What more for my lords have I?
Dark coloured robes with a dragon fine,
And silken skirts with the hatchet sign.

Clear bubbles the spring, bubbles the spring,
Around they gather the cress:
The princes all are coming to court,
Their banners the winds caress.
The dragon flag in the breezes swells,
To the *hwuy-hwuy* sound of the bells.
With two outside, the teams go past,
These are the princes come at last.

Red covers the knee, covers the knee:
Their buskins are red below.
Lofty bearing and stately mien,
Yonder my princes go.
In such the Son of Heaven delights,
The king shall renew their rights.
May the pleasure and power for my lords increase,
May the land yield corn and the years bring peace.

BLUE COLLAR

O YOU with the collar of blue,
My heart is longing for you.
Though to call you I am not free,
Wherefore not send to me?

O you with the girdle of blue,
Long, long do I think of you.
Though to seek you I am not free,
Wherefore not come to me?

Ah, random and pleasure-drawn,
To the View Tower you are gone;
And a day without your sight
Is like three months in its flight.

A FRIEND FORGOTTEN

THE winds blow soft from the East,
But the storm welters by.
In the day of disaster and fear,
It was all you and I.
In the hour of your pride
You have cast me aside.

The bland winds blown from the East
Tornadoes pursue.
In the hour of disaster and fear
More than brother were you.
In the hour of delight
I am cast from your sight.

The winds come fair from the East:
On the hills overhead
There is never a blade that is green,
Not a leaf but is dead.
My worth you forget,
But my faults linger yet.

THE EPHEMERAE

IN black and yellow are clad
The wings of the ephemerae;
But my heart is sad, is sad,
Because they will not stay with me.

Many colours adorn
The robes of the ephemerae;
But my heart's forlorn, forlorn,
Because they will not rest with me.

In robes of hempen snow
Rise the ephemerae;
But my heart is full of woe
Because they will not bide with me.

HAPPY IN HAOU

FISHES are there, by the score, I trow,
Their large heads sleepily showing ;
The King is here, in the city of Haou,
At ease while the wine-cup's flowing.

Fishes are there in the weeds enow,
Their long tails lazily swaying ;
The King is here, in the city of Haou,
Drinking, dreaming, delaying.

The fish lie under the willow bough
That leans and shadows the rushes ;
The King is here, in the city of Haou,
At peace, and the wine-cup blushes.

THREE GIFTS

A royal gourd was given me,
And in exchange an emerald I gave,
No mere return for courtesy,
But that our friendship might outlast the grave.

A princely peach was given me,
And in exchange a ruby gem I gave,
No mere exchange for courtesy,
But that our friendship might outlast the grave.

A yellow plum was given me,
And in exchange a sardonyx I gave,
No mere return for courtesy,
But that our friendship might outlast the grave.

BRAVE THOUGHTS

GREEN is the upper robe,
Green with a yellow lining;
My sorrow none may probe,
Nor can I cease repining.

Green is the upper robe,
The lower garb is yellow;
My sorrow none may probe,
Nor any season mellow.

The silk was of emerald dye,
Ah! this was all your doing;
But I dream of an age gone by
To keep my heart from rueing.

Fine linen or coarse, 'tis cold,
But all I have to dress me;
So I think of the men of old,
And find brave thoughts possess me.

ON THE BANKS OF HO

THE little boat of cypress rocks,
Rocks in the midst of Ho;
He was my lord, whose long dark locks
Divided in their downward flow.
Till death betide
His bride,
I'll wed no other.
O Heaven! O mother!
Will you not understand your child?

The little boat of cypress rocks
There by the side of Ho;
He was my only one, whose locks
Divided in their downward flow.
Till death betide
His bride,
I'll wed no other.
O Heaven! O mother!
Far from me be the thing defiled!
Will you not understand your child?

Printed by M'Laren & Co., Ltd., Edinburgh.

IN CROWN 8VO. PRICE 5S.

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LONDON: THE ORIENT PRESS
Editorial Department: 168 FLEET STREET, E.C.
Trade Department: 26 PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 23 January, 2019